

## PERSONS NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE, MARCH 1979 (including discouraged jobseekers)

### INQUIRIES

*If you want to know more about these statistics ring Mr Eric Hubbard on Canberra 526507 or our State Office, or write to Information Services, ABS, P.O. Box 10, Belconnen, A.C.T. 2616*  
*For copies of this publication contact Information Services, Canberra 526627 or State offices.*

### EXPLANATORY NOTES

#### Introduction

In March 1979 a survey, based on the monthly population survey, was conducted throughout Australia in order to obtain information about persons aged 15 to 64 years who were not in the labour force; in particular whether they wanted a job and, if they did, the reason they were not looking for work.

2. Preliminary results of the survey were published on 23 May 1979 in *Persons Not in the Labour Force, March 1979 (Preliminary)*, (6219.0). This publication contains final and more detailed information. Results of similar surveys conducted in November 1975 and May 1977 were published in previous issues of this publication.

3. The survey was based on a multi-stage area sample of private dwellings (about 30,000 houses, flats etc.) and non-private dwellings (hotels, motels, institutions etc.) and covered about two-thirds of one per cent of the population of Australia. The information was obtained from the occupants of selected dwellings by carefully chosen and specially trained interviewers, the interviews being conducted during the two weeks beginning on Monday, 12th March, 1979.

#### Scope

4. The survey included all persons aged fifteen years and over except:

- (a) members of the permanent defence forces
- (b) certain diplomatic personnel of overseas governments, customarily excluded from census and estimated populations
- (c) overseas visitors holidaying in Australia, and
- (d) members of non-Australian defence forces (and their dependants) stationed in Australia.

#### Definitions

5. The labour force category to which a person is assigned depends on his *actual activity* (i.e. whether working, looking for work, etc.) during a specified week known as *the survey week* which is the week immediately preceding that in which the interview takes place. Definitions of the principal labour force categories appearing in this publication are given in *The Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0).

6. *Persons who wanted a job* are those who were neither employed at the time of the survey nor had looked for work in the four weeks before the interview week, who answered 'yes' or 'maybe' to the question "Even though you have not been looking for work would you like a full-time or part-time job now?"

7. Among the reasons for not looking for work *personal considerations* include own ill health, physical disability or pregnancy; studying or returning to studies; and no necessity to work; *family considerations* include such matters as ill health of another person; inability to find child care; children thought to be too young; a preference for looking after children and disapproval by the person's spouse.

8. *Discouraged jobseekers* are persons who wanted a job but *were not looking for work* because they believed they would not be able to find a job for any of the following reasons: they were considered by employers to be too young or too old; they had language or racial difficulties; they lacked the necessary training, skills or experience; or there were no jobs in their locality or line of work.

**Note.** Persons who stated that they were looking for work are not included in the estimates of discouraged jobseekers, even though they may have been classified as not in the labour force. Persons looking for work are classified as not in the labour force if they:

- (i) had not taken active steps to find employment, or
- (ii) would not have been able to start work in the survey week for reasons other than their own temporary illness or injury.

(*Active steps to find work* include checking or registering with the Commonwealth Employment Service or other employment agencies, writing, telephoning or applying in person to an employer, answering a newspaper advertisement for a job, advertising or tendering for work, contacting friends or relatives and looking on factory or employment service notice boards.)

#### Reliability of the estimates

9. Since the estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from occupants of a sample of

dwellings they are subject to sampling variability; that is they may differ from the figures that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included in the survey. More information on this topic will be found in the Technical Note, page 8.

#### Related publications

10. Other ABS publications which may be of interest include:

*The Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0)

*Labour Force Experience* (6206.0)

*Persons Looking for Work* (6222.0)

*Labour Mobility* (6209.0)

All publications produced by the ABS are listed in *Catalogue of Publications* (1101.0) which is available free of charge from any ABS office.

#### Symbols and other usages

\* Subject to sampling variability too high for most practical uses. See paragraph 9 above.

Because figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

R.J. CAMERON  
Australian Statistician

TABLE 1. CIVILIAN POPULATION AGED 15 YEARS AND OVER : EMPLOYMENT STATUS, MARCH 1979

	Number ('000)			Per cent of total		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
Civilian population aged 15 years and over	5,238.6	5,365.7	10,604.3	100.0	100.0	100.0
Employed	3,902.1	2,158.1	6,060.2	74.5	40.2	57.2
Unemployed	224.3	203.5	427.8	4.3	3.8	4.0
Not in the labour force	1,112.2	3,004.0	4,116.3	21.2	56.0	38.8
Aged 65 years and over	506.7	762.3	1,269.0	9.7	14.2	12.0
Aged 15 to 64 years	605.5	2,241.7	2,847.2	11.6	41.8	26.9
Inmate of institution, permanently unable to work, boarding school student	57.6	27.5	85.2	1.1	0.5	0.8
Had not looked for work in the four weeks before the interview week	523.8	2,168.3	2,692.1	10.0	40.4	25.4
Wanted a job	92.7	431.9	524.6	1.8	8.0	4.9
Would have liked a job at the time of the survey	79.2	368.3	447.5	1.5	6.9	4.2
Might have liked a job at the time of the survey	13.5	63.6	77.1	0.3	1.2	0.7
Would not have liked a job at the time of the survey	425.0	1,721.5	2,146.5	8.1	32.1	20.2
Did not know whether would have liked a job at the time of the survey	6.1	14.9	21.0	0.1	0.3	0.2
Had looked for work in the four weeks before the interview week	24.1	45.9	70.0	0.5	0.9	0.7
Had taken no active steps to obtain employment	13.3	33.0	46.3	0.3	0.6	0.4
Was unable to start a job in the survey week for reasons other than own temporary illness or injury	10.8	12.9	23.7	0.2	0.2	0.2

TABLE 2. PERSONS AGED 15 TO 64 YEARS WHO WERE NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE AND WHO WANTED A JOB:  
AGE AND REASON (a) FOR NOT LOOKING FOR WORK, MARCH 1979  
(<sup>'000</sup>)

Reason (a) for not looking for work	Age group (years)							Total
	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-59	60-64	
MALES								
Personal considerations	34.2	9.4	*	*	5.9	5.9	6.3	69.4
Discouraged	4.7	*	*	*	*	*	*	9.4
Total (b)/(c)	44.7	11.6	7.1	5.6	8.3	7.0	8.5	92.7
FEMALES								
Had a job to go to	*	5.4		*	*	*	*	8.9
Personal considerations	39.6	12.1	22.9	22.3	27.1	10.5	4.8	139.3
Family considerations	5.6	30.5	85.0	44.1	20.0	5.3	*	192.4
Discouraged	6.0		10.3	14.9	14.2	5.5	*	54.0
Considered too young or too old	*	*	*	4.9		5.5		11.9
No jobs in locality or line of work	4.6		9.1	11.2	9.3	*	*	36.8
No jobs in suitable hours	*	4.5		4.7		*	*	10.1
Other reasons	4.6		7.2	5.0	5.0	*	*	23.7
Total (c)	53.4	50.3	133.9	91.7	69.2	22.9	10.5	431.9
PERSONS								
Had a job to go to	5.2		4.8	*	*	*	*	12.9
Personal considerations	73.8	21.5	26.7	26.2	33.0	16.4	11.1	208.7
Family considerations	5.9	30.7	85.8	44.5	20.0	5.4	*	194.1
Discouraged	7.7	*	10.7	15.3	15.4	6.4	*	63.4
Considered too young or too old	*	*	*	5.4		6.6		14.0
No jobs in locality or line of work	6.4	*	9.5	11.3	9.7	*	*	43.2
No jobs in suitable hours	*	4.5		4.7		*	*	11.2
Other reasons	5.6	*	8.2	5.5	5.7	*	*	30.2
Total (c)	98.1	61.8	141.0	97.2	77.5	29.9	19.1	524.6

(a) Reasons were ranked in the order shown in the "Persons" section above. (b) Includes all other reasons. (c) Includes a small number of persons who answered "Don't know" when asked why they were not looking for work.

TABLE 3. PERSONS AGED 15 TO 64 YEARS WHO WERE NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE AND WHO WANTED A JOB:  
BIRTHPLACE AND REASON (a) FOR NOT LOOKING FOR WORK, MARCH 1979  
(<sup>'000</sup>)

(300)

		Born overseas						
Reason (a) for not looking for work	Born in Australia	Period of arrival			Birthplace		Total	Total
		Before 1961	1961-1969	1970-1979	Main English speaking countries (d)	Other countries		
MALES								
Personal considerations	52.7	5.1	6.3	5.4	7.5	9.2	16.7	69.4
Discouraged	7.2	*	*	*	*	*	*	9.4
Total (b)(c)	70.1	6.8	8.7	7.1	9.6	13.0	22.6	92.7
FEMALES								
Had a job to go to	6.6	*	*	*	*	*	*	8.9
Personal considerations	104.7	14.7	10.7	9.2	14.2	20.5	34.7	139.3
Family considerations	141.6	18.6	19.0	13.2	23.9	26.8	50.7	192.4
Discouraged	37.1	7.3	5.4	*	9.3	7.6	16.9	54.0
Considered too young or too old	7.8	*	*	*	*	*	*	11.9
No jobs in locality or line of work	26.6	*	6.0		6.8	*	10.2	36.8
No jobs in suitable hours	8.2	*	*	*	*	*	*	10.1
Other reasons	19.4	*	*	*	*	*	*	23.7
Total (c)	319.9	43.2	39.4	29.5	53.8	58.3	112.0	431.9
PERSONS								
Had a job to go to	9.6	*	*	*	*	*	*	12.9
Personal considerations	157.3	19.8	17.0	14.6	21.7	29.7	51.4	208.7
Family considerations	142.7	18.7	19.2	13.5	24.0	27.4	51.4	194.1
Discouraged	44.3	8.0	5.8	5.3	9.8	9.3	19.1	63.4
Considered too young or too old	9.2	*	*	*	*	*	4.9	14.0
No jobs in locality or line of work	32.1	4.6	*	*	6.9	*	11.1	43.2
No jobs in suitable hours	8.9	*	*	*	*	*	*	11.2
Other reasons	24.4	*	*	*	*	*	5.8	30.2
Total (c)	390.0	50.0	48.1	36.5	63.3	71.3	134.6	524.6

For footnotes (a) to (c) see Table 2. (d) Comprises the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, the United State of America, South Africa and New Zealand.

TABLE 4. PERSONS AGED 15 TO 64 YEARS WHO WERE NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE AND WHO WANTED A JOB:  
REASON (a) FOR NOT LOOKING FOR WORK, MARCH 1979  
(<sup>'000</sup>)

<i>Reason (a) for not looking for work</i>	<i>N.S.W.</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>S.A.</i>	<i>W.A.</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>A.C.T.</i>	<i>Australia (d)</i>
MALES								
Personal considerations	23.0	20.6	10.0	6.5	6.5	*	*	69.4
Discouraged	— 6.0 —		*	*	*	*	*	9.4
<i>Total (b)(c)</i>	<i>30.0</i>	<i>26.4</i>	<i>14.7</i>	<i>8.5</i>	<i>8.8</i>	<i>1.6</i>	<i>*</i>	<i>92.7</i>
FEMALES								
Had a job to go to	— 5.5 —		*	*	*	*	*	8.9
Personal considerations	50.8	40.9	18.8	10.3	11.8	2.0	3.7	139.3
Family considerations	64.8	50.5	28.7	17.3	19.5	4.8	4.2	192.4
Discouraged	19.4	12.3	10.8	5.3	4.3	*	*	54.0
Considered too young or too old	5.3	*	*	*	*	*	*	11.9
No jobs in locality or line of work	11.9	8.8	8.4	3.6	2.9	*	*	36.8
No jobs in suitable hours	— 5.8 —		*	*	*	*	*	10.1
Other reasons	8.3	*	5.9	*	2.5	*	*	23.7
<i>Total (c)</i>	<i>150.7</i>	<i>113.6</i>	<i>68.6</i>	<i>35.3</i>	<i>40.6</i>	<i>9.3</i>	<i>9.2</i>	<i>431.9</i>
PERSONS								
Had a job to go to	— 7.5 —		*	*	*	*	*	12.9
Personal considerations	73.8	61.5	28.8	16.8	18.4	3.1	5.1	208.7
Family considerations	65.7	50.8	29.0	17.3	19.7	4.9	4.2	194.1
Discouraged	22.9	14.8	11.6	6.1	5.2	*	*	63.4
Considered too young or too old	6.4	*	*	*	*	*	*	14.0
No jobs in locality or line of work	13.9	10.7	8.8	4.3	3.4	*	*	43.2
No jobs in suitable hours	— 6.9 —		*	*	*	*	*	11.2
Other reasons	9.5	5.6	8.2	*	3.1	*	*	30.2
<i>Total (c)</i>	<i>180.7</i>	<i>140.0</i>	<i>83.3</i>	<i>43.9</i>	<i>49.4</i>	<i>10.8</i>	<i>10.7</i>	<i>524.6</i>

For footnotes (a) to (c) see Table 2. (d) Includes Northern Territory.

TABLE 5. REASONS FOR NOT LOOKING FOR WORK : ALL RESPONSES (a) OF PERSONS AGED 15 TO 64 YEARS WHO WERE NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE AND WHO WANTED A JOB, MARCH 1979 ('000)

<i>Reason (a) for not looking for work</i>	<i>N.S.W.</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>S.A.</i>	<i>W.A.</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>N.T.</i>	<i>A.C.T.</i>	<i>Australia</i>
MALES									
Personal considerations	23.0	20.6	10.2	6.5	6.5	*	*	*	69.5
<i>Total (b)(c)</i>	<i>35.7</i>	<i>32.5</i>	<i>17.6</i>	<i>9.8</i>	<i>10.0</i>	<i>2.2</i>	<i>*</i>	<i>*</i>	<i>110.8</i>
FEMALES									
Had a job to go to	— 5.5 —		*	*	*	*	*	*	8.9
Personal considerations	50.8	41.1	18.9	10.3	11.8	2.0	*	3.7	139.7
Family considerations	71.8	57.7	31.0	18.6	21.4	5.4	2.6	4.4	212.9
Considered too young or too old	6.4	4.5	*	— 3.2 —		*	*	*	16.1
Language or racial difficulties; lack necessary skills, training or experience	— 7.3 —		*	— 2.7 —		*	*	*	12.8
No jobs in locality or line of work	23.9	16.0	11.5	5.6	5.0	*	*	*	64.5
No jobs in suitable hours	16.4	13.7	7.7	4.4	3.9	*	*	*	47.9
Other reasons	13.7	7.7	8.9	2.8	4.1	*	*	*	40.2
<i>Total (c)</i>	<i>191.8</i>	<i>146.4</i>	<i>83.7</i>	<i>45.6</i>	<i>51.0</i>	<i>11.8</i>	<i>5.0</i>	<i>11.3</i>	<i>546.5</i>
PERSONS									
Had a job to go to	— 7.5 —		*	— 2.5 —		*	*	*	12.9
Personal considerations	73.8	61.7	29.1	16.8	18.4	3.1	*	5.1	209.2
Family considerations	72.9	58.1	31.5	18.6	21.6	5.5	2.6	4.4	215.3
Considered too young or too old	7.8	5.1	*	— 3.4 —		*	*	*	18.9
Language or racial difficulties; lack necessary skills, training or experience	4.9	*	*	— 3.3 —		*	*	*	14.8
No jobs in locality or line of work	27.8	19.8	12.3	6.8	6.0	1.6	*	*	76.7
No jobs in suitable hours	19.2	16.3	8.3	5.0	4.5	*	*	*	55.4
Other reasons	15.7	10.6	12.3	3.5	4.8	*	*	*	50.1
<i>Total (c)</i>	<i>227.5</i>	<i>178.9</i>	<i>101.3</i>	<i>55.4</i>	<i>61.0</i>	<i>14.0</i>	<i>6.2</i>	<i>13.2</i>	<i>657.4</i>

(a) Includes all responses for those who gave more than one reason for not looking for work. (b) and (c) see footnotes to Table 2.

TABLE 6. PERSONS AGED 15 TO 64 YEARS WHO WERE DISCOURAGED JOBSEEKERS:  
STATES AND STATE CAPITAL CITIES, MARCH 1979  
(<sup>'000</sup>)

	<i>Females</i>		<i>Persons</i>	
	<i>Married</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Married</i>	<i>Total</i>
STATES				
New South Wales	17.4	19.4	19.1	22.9
Victoria	9.9	12.3	10.4	14.8
Queensland	9.5	10.8	9.8	11.6
South Australia	4.8	5.3	5.0	6.1
Western Australia	3.4	4.3	3.9	5.2
<b>Australia (a)</b>	<b>46.5</b>	<b>54.0</b>	<b>50.3</b>	<b>63.4</b>
STATE CAPITAL CITIES				
Sydney	6.9	7.9	7.7	9.9
Melbourne	7.9	9.8	8.1	11.5
Brisbane	3.7	3.7	3.9	4.0
Adelaide	2.9	3.4	3.0	3.9
Perth	*	3.0	2.5	3.3
<b>Total (b)</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>28.0</b>	<b>25.4</b>	<b>32.7</b>

(a) Includes Tasmania, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory. (b) Includes Hobart.

TABLE 7. PERSONS AGED 15 TO 64 YEARS WHO WERE DISCOURAGED JOBSEEKERS : WHETHER HAD LOOKED  
FOR WORK AND WHETHER HAD A JOB IN THE LAST TWELVE MONTHS, MARCH 1979  
(<sup>'000</sup>)

	<i>Females</i>		<i>Persons</i>	
	<i>Married</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Married</i>	<i>Total</i>
Had a job in the last 12 months	6.2	7.6	7.5	9.8
Had looked for work since that job	*	*	*	4.8
Had not looked for work since that job	*	*	*	4.9
Did not have a job in the last 12 months	40.3	46.4	42.8	53.6
Had looked for work in the last 12 months	14.4	16.7	16.1	20.9
Had not looked for work in the last 12 months	25.9	29.7	26.7	32.7
Had looked for work	17.7	20.9	19.6	25.7
Had not looked for work	28.8	33.0	30.8	37.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>46.5</b>	<b>54.0</b>	<b>50.3</b>	<b>63.4</b>

The estimates are derived from the population survey by use of a complex ratio estimation procedure, which ensures that the survey estimates conform to an independently estimated distribution of the population by age and sex, rather than to the age and sex distribution within the sample itself.

2. Since the estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from occupants of a sample of dwellings, they are subject to sampling variability; that is, they may differ from the figures that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included. One measure of the likely difference is given by the *standard error*, which indicates the extent to which an estimate might have varied by chance because only a sample of dwellings was included in the survey. There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate will differ by less than one standard error from the figure that would have been obtained if all dwellings had been included in the survey, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two standard errors.

3. Space does not allow for the separate indication of the standard errors of all estimates in this publication. A table of *standard errors* for general application is given below. These figures will not give a precise measure of the standard error of a particular estimate since they are averages based on calculations for a limited number of past surveys over a wide range of labour force characteristics. However, they will provide an indication of the magnitude of the standard error. An example of the calculation and use of standard errors is as follows: the estimated number of persons aged 15 to 64 years who were not in the labour force and who wanted a job is 524,600 (Table 1). From the table below it will be seen that the estimate has a standard error of about

4. The reliability of an estimated percentage, computed by using sample data for both numerator and denominator, depends upon both the size of the numerator and the size of the denominator. However, the per cent standard error of the estimated percentage will generally be lower than the per cent standard error of the estimate of the numerator. The per cent standard errors of the numerator can be obtained from the table below.

5. As the standard errors in the table below show *the smaller the estimate the higher is the relative standard error*. Very small estimates are thus subject to such high standard errors (relative to the size of the estimate) as to detract seriously from their value for most reasonable uses. In the tables in this publication estimates less than the lowest levels shown in the table below have not been included. Although figures for these small components can in some cases be derived by subtraction, they should not be regarded as reliable.

6. The imprecision due to sampling variability, which is measured by the standard error, should not be confused with inaccuracies that may occur because of imperfections in reporting by interviewers and respondents. Inaccuracies of this kind are referred to as the *non-sampling error*, and they may occur in any enumeration, whether it be a full count or only a sample. Every effort is made to reduce the non-sampling error to a minimum by careful design of questionnaires, intensive training and supervision of interviewers and efficient operating procedures.

[illegible]